

# This is my **SEASON**



**WINNER OF  
RIVANA DRAMA  
PRIZE**

**ROWLAND WORLU**

**A THREE - ACT PLAY**

# **THIS IS MY SEASON**

**ROWLAND WORLU**



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*All the characters in this book  
have no existence outside  
the imagination of the Author,  
and have no relation  
whatsoever to anyone bearing  
the same name or names.*

*They are not even distantly inspired  
by any individual known or unknown  
to the Author, and all the incidents  
are pure inventions.*



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## FOR HACHIMENUM

Through the numerous dialogue, the play provides the reader with an opportunity for studying gamblers' motives and behaviour.

*"This is my season  
To strike fortunes  
Out of my lover's dislike  
And win the favour of adversaries  
Amidst challenges and oppositions."*

## PREFACE

Experience has shown that undesirable habits in our society increase when they are condemned verbally; but when the effect is dramatized, it leaves a discouraging impact on potential victims.

In other words, when we observe the behaviour of gamblers, it becomes apparent that the greatest gain derivable from gambling is the hope it creates in gamblers. Oftentimes, such hope turns to be a mirage. Yet the gambler does not realize his eldorado, and this causes him to make boundless sacrifices.

This short but powerful piece satirizes the pool betting in particular, and gambling generally. The play presents the world of gambling and the lives of people associated with it. The evil effects of gambling in our society are adroitly revealed in this short piece. It provides a window into the danger and uncertainty that surround the lives of gamblers.

With the interesting, witty and humorous dialogue, the play provides the reader with an opportunity for studying gamblers' motives and behaviour.

Exposing children (especially those at the secondary school age) to this evil effects of gambling will yield attractive dividend by way of discouraging them from plunging their lives into this 'lazyman's dreamland'.

**Rowland Worlu**



## CHARACTERS

Adele Wagbara	:	A chronic pool staker
Seku	:	Pool's Staker
Ogo Ndameli	:	Pool's Staker and Agent
Iwe	:	Pool's Staker
Nnetiti	:	Ade's wife
Dan	:	Pool's Staker
Udo	:	Pool's Staker
Director	:	Chairman/CEO of Hachi Holding Ltd.
Peke	:	Director's Secretary
Commander	:	Leader of the inmates in the cell of Okido Police Station.
Cell Serg.	:	His assistant
Inmate 1	:	
Inmate 2	:	
Police	:	Officer on duty
DPO	:	Divisional Police Officer (Okido Police Station)
1st Tax Collector	:	
2nd Tax Collector	:	
3rd Tax Collector	:	
4th Tax Collector	:	
Native Doctor	:	Akpan Nkpokporo
Ezinwo	:	Pool's Staker
Frank	:	Pool's Staker
Ebom	:	A crippled Gambler
Okon	:	Gambler
Agwotrumbe	:	A native doctor in Epikili land
Amamini	:	Gambling god in Epikili land
Neighbours	:	
Chikwadoru	:	Police Corporal

# ACT 1

## Scene 1

### *Pool Office*

**SEKU:** I've done my forecast this week, and I don't intend to confuse myself with further forecast.

**IWE:** Australian season was quite hostile to me, making me a cheap prey in the hands of promoters. For this season, I'm taking my time.

**SEKU:** Apart from my forecast, I'm hoping to get some draws from Ade's key this week, and that gives me double assurance that this is my season.

**IWE:** Have you won any money since the season began?

**SEKU:** No!

**IWE:** How is it then your season?

**SEKU:** Don't worry; this week will make it my season  
(*Ade enters*)

**SEKU:** Here he comes at the nick of time!

**IWE:** That's right!

**ADE:** (*Smiling*) Whoever has a draw should give me. I have got two gazzeted draws; and I'm now

looking for another sure horse to liquidate promoters this week.

**SEKU:** I have three untouchable bankers. I will only release them at 1:00pm on Saturday.

**ADE:** Why so late?

**SEKU:** I don't want anybody to hawk my God-given draws. They are gifts from above!

**IWE:** Give me one and take mine

**SEKU:** I don't need yours but take number 5

**IWE:** You'll tell me how you came by it, otherwise I won't accept it.

**SEKU:** I'll only explain to you after next week, that is the cup week to enable you wait for them in the next cup week.

**IWE:** That's alright! But I wouldn't use it unless I'm convinced of the credibility of the source.

**SEKU:** What about yours?

**IWE:** I'll explain if you care

**SEKU:** Go ahead and explain

**IWE:** Start from week 2. What's the last letter on coupon number 5?

**SEKU:** N

**IWE:** Find its alphabetical equivalent.

SEKU: 14

IWE: It drew that week?

SEKU: Yes!

IWE: Then check if it has not been consistent till date.

ADE: It has not failed one bit, and it's producing 7 this week.

IWE: That's it!

SEKU: That's a pleasant coincidence! But it may fail now because it has become popular.

IWE: How is it popular? Did you know it before now?

SEKU: No! Except that number 7 is in my collection.

ADE: Go on and give more, don't mind him.

IWE: Take the last English record and start from the first pre-cup week. Identify the team on number 47 (away). Locate the opponent of Burnley. Both must draw on the cup week.

SEKU: (*After some moments*) It did not fail all through the season.

IWE: Now come to the current English season, and check it up to date.

ADE: Alright!



- IWE:** What's on ground this week?
- SEKU:** 18
- IWE:** Then take it as another sure horse.
- SEKU:** You've given 2 games remaining another one so that I can nap the 3 games.
- ADE:** I don't believe in so many games. If you have faith in your games, here is a challenge board.
- SEKU:** At how much? I'm ready to bet my life on all my games.
- ADE:** That is boasting! Just write one on the challenge and drop your ₦500 and I'll do likewise.
- SEKU:** I don't mind. Who'll hold it?
- ADE:** *(Calling)* Ogo! Ogo!  
*(Answering from the rear and walking in)*
- OGO:** What is it?
- SEKU:** We don't want your challenge board to be vacant this week. I'm betting No. 7 with ₦5,000.00 Let Ade set a number and drop his money.
- ADE:** *(Bringing it out)* This is my money. I bet No. 20
- OGO:** What if the two games fail?
- SEKU:** Then you will give us our money.

**ADE:** No, the money becomes yours, Ogo. That becomes the price of guesswork.

**SEKU:** That's alright! I don't give a damn.

**OGO:** Are you not betting, Iwe?

**IWE:** Let me hold my peace. Pool is a mountain which must be climbed with caution and uncertainty, however smooth the path appears.

**ADE:** That's for amateurs. I've mastered the tricks involved.

**SEKU:** There is no perfection in the knowledge of pool. But if you are lucky to stumble across a key, your confidence will rise as though you went to Cardiff to join the compilers.

**OGO:** Yes, many have struck their fortune in pool. Last week a man won ₦400,000 with just ₦10,000 in Otondo village. A forth night ago, Barlacks won over N3m.

**ADE:** That's how I'll win next week. The money I'll win this week will enable me play with a reasonable amount next week.

*(They disperse. Ade comes back to meet Ogo)*

**ADE:** I didn't want to play while they were around. Nap these numbers for me: 11, 20, 37

**OGO:** For how much?

**ADE:** For ₦2,800.00 I'm just using my salary for the month. I earned ₦3,500.00 I've used ₦500.00 for the challenge board, and now using ₦2,800.00 for NAP. I only reserve ₦200.00 for myself.

**OGO:** What then do you have for your family.

**ADE:** Nothing for now! Let me hope that I'll win something before my wife understands that I've been paid. Meanwhile she is not aware that I play pool.

**OGO:** Does it matter if she knows?

**ADE:** It matters indeed! She has often treated stakers with scorn. The day she realizes will mark the end of peace in that house because she believes that stakers have no future. (*He rises and leaves*).

## Scene 2

### *(Ade's House-Monday Morning)*

*Nnetiti wakes her husband as he dreams of the amount he'll claim if he wins both the challenge and NAP, and informs him that the water for bathing is ready. He pretends to be reluctant stressing that he will not continue on an empty stomach. She encourages him in the hope that he may be paid soon.*

**NNETITI:** *(Walks to the bedroom and pushes him)* Dear, dear, are you fast asleep?

**ADE:** N-N-No-oo work!, I was just thinking how I would go on an empty stomach.

**NNETITI:** No you can't go on an empty stomach. I've managed to prepare something; come and have your bath first *(Ade sighs)*.

**NNETITI:** Why are you sighing? Wouldn't you have gone to work today?

**ADA** I don't feel like until I receive my pay for the month.

**NNETITI:** That is not wise. What if you are to be paid today, will anybody bring it down here for you?. Besides, you can't leave their vehicle here on a working day.



**ADE:** Yes, you are right. I'll go to see what happens today. *(He takes his bath quickly, dresses and hurries out to go)*

**NNETTI:** No! no.....

**ADE:** What's wrong!

**NNETITI:** Sit down, and eat a little; you must not go with nothing in your stomach.

**ADE:** No I must! I've just remembered that my boss asked me to come first to his house and take his children to school. *(He hurries out)*

## Scene 3

### *Pool Office*

*Ogo has already ticked Ade's number on the challenge board Ade sights it on arrival and gives a shy smile. As he turns to the score board the countenance changed.*

**OGO:** The challenge is in your favour. Winning is wonderful!

**ADE:** I'm not surprised (*Turning to the score board*) This has come at the nick of time. No mistake! no doubt about it, this is my season. (*Iwe enters*)

**IWE:** Ade, you are grinning broadly at me, what has happened?

**ADE:** (*Pointing at the challenge and score boards*) These two boards will tell you why.

**IWE:** (*Looking at the two boards*) That's fine! Congrats!

**ADE:** My only worry is that draws are too many. Twenty three draws on coupon! The payment will be slashed to one eight.

**IWE:** This is one frustration which Rivers promoters cause to stakers.

**OGO:** Yes, it's not so in other states.

**ADE:** That's for now; with time you'll see that the conspiracy will spread like harmattan fire.

**OGO:** This can't happen among European Promoters. Just that it's not possible to post coupon abroad as it used to be in the seventies, many agents would have preferred to patronize them.

**IWE:** Even stakers! (*Enters Seku*)

**SEKU:** Everybody is smiling and chatting freely, am I sure that these rogues have not tricked us as usual?

**OGO:** They have tricked us save Ade.

**SEKU:** Ok! He won the challenge. I can see it already.

**IWE:** Not only that, he got three over three in his Nap.

**SEKU:** Is that true? (*Looking at Ade*)

**ADE:** (*Smiling*) It's the Lord's doing...

**IWE:** And it's marvelous in our sight.

**SEKU:** (*Walks to Ade*) Have a hand shake. You have won gallantly and I have lost gallantly.

(*Laughter, laughter*)

**SEKU:** I hope I'll have a piece of the action?

**ADE:** That reminds me! Ogo get me the ₦1,000.00 on challenge. In short give me ₦500.00 and use the remainder to send for drinks. Get everybody's brand.

- IWE:** As many as would come around?
- ADE:** Yes! If that is not enough, I'll give back this one.
- SEKU:** That is not a sufficient piece of the action for me, you know.
- ADE:** I'll teach you how to kill your own fish instead of giving you fish to eat.
- SEKU:** Yes, but the wherewithal first.  
(*Two more stakers enter to check results*)
- DAN:** This one weh merry day, any body don get them?
- ADE:** Yes, sit down first and have some drinks. Ogo give them what they take.
- UDO:** Thank you.
- SEKU:** Ehe! Ade how much did you win?
- ADE:** It's supposed to be ₦112,000 but now that it's one eight, let Ogo tell you how much they'll pay.
- OGO:** They'll pay ₦14,000 because of too many draws on coupon.
- UDO:** Wayo Promoters! They no even pay one quarter.
- DAN:** If me I get better game weh my key give me, I go go another State go play am. I no go play here.



**UDO:** Nigerian Promoters no biam.

**ADE:** Well, I've said it all. This is my season! The Promoters are already in my trouble.

**DAN:** I beg Ade, remember me for games. Make I see whether I go win small money take help myself. Pool don wreck me and my family since 1972 weh I start am.

**OGO:** The only thing I can say pool has deprived me of is education. If the amount of time I commit to forecasting was committed to reading, I would by now be a professor of repute.

**IWE:** Ogo, what achievement have you made through pool so far?

**OGO:** With pool, I was able to erect a building, even though I've not completed it. Besides, I'm taking care of twelve children aside from my wife.

**IWE:** How long have you been working on that building.

**OGO:** It's about eleven years now.

**SEKU:** You see! Going to two decades. That's a life project.

**IWE** That's a life project indeed. Five room for two decades.

**SEKU:** That was even possible because you are an agent. What ever you lose comes back to you through commission.

**DAN:** And the twelve children self, no bi some dey do boy-boy for other people house?

**ADE:** Not to worry! The pool messiah is here! They that sow in tears shall reap with joy; This maybe your chance.

**SEKU:** How?

**ADE:** I've told you that this is my season. And my season can as well be your season if you appropriate the opportunity.

**UDO:** I know say you go like to sell your games, make we know how much.

**ADE:** You are right because I paid through the nose to get the key. Nothing good comes so cheap.

**IWE:** How much then?

**ADE:** Just three killer draws for ₦2,000 and I'll release them at 1.00 pm on Saturday. This cup week will be the genesis of your fortune. Mine has started and nothing can interrupt it.

**DAN:** Na where we go meet you?

**ADE:** Meet me here at the appointed time?  
(THEY DISPERSE)

## Scene 4

*(At the office complex of HACHI HOLDINGS LTD)*

**PEKE:** *(Hands over a paper to Ade)* The Director asked me to give you this.

**ADE:** *(Opens it and reads the last sentence)* "Explain why a disciplinary action cannot be taken against you for apparent dereliction of duty".  
*(Turns to Peke)*

**ADE:** How am I derelicting my duty? Just because he asked me to come and take his children to school this morning and I failed owing to the sudden illness of my daughter.

**PEKE:** *(Sympathetically)* That's alright! Put it down in writing - I'm sure he will understand.

**ADE:** *(Squeezes the paper and tears it)* I won't put down any thing. I think it's high time I resigned.

*(PEKE MOPES AT HIM AS HE DASHES OUT AND BANGS THE DOOR)*

**PEKE:** What a hell am I seeing? To answer a query can... *(Bell rings and Peke goes in to answer)*

**DIRECTOR:** I heard some brawl around your office. What's the matter?

**PEKE:** Ade came and I handed out the letter to him as you directed. That's all.

**DIRECTOR:** And what happened again?

**PEKE:** He began to fume, claiming his daughter was sick this morning and that delayed his arrival at the office. Then I asked him to put it in writing....

### **ADE ENTERS**

**ADE:** *(Somewhat in a haste) Oga, happy to meet you. This is my letter. (Searches for the letter among the pieces of papers in his hand. One copy coupon falls, as he stoops to pick it, another falls, and flies under the Director's table)*

**DIRECTOR:** What letter? *(He queries with curiosity)*

**ADE:** You'll find out. I think I'm getting fed up with the system *(more to himself)* I know I'm poor, but that's for the time being. So it's not everything I'll stomach.

**ADE:** Here it is. *(Places it on his table)*

**DIRECTOR:** The Secretary is there.

**ADE:** This is not for Peke, it's for you. *(His copy coupon falls out and he stoops to pick it. Another one flies out and he stoops again to pick it under the director's table).*

**DIRECTOR:** What's gone wrong with you? Do you realise it's my leg you're moving that way.



**ADE:** Sorry sir, *(Without concern)* I must pick my paper under your table. It's my life. It's my future. *(He moves another leg, harder this time)*

**DIRECTOR:** Hei! Peke help! Adele is mad.

**PEKE:** *(Rushes to director's rescue)* Ade what do you think you're doing.

**ADE:** I'm doing the thing.

**PEKE:** Sure!

**ADE:** Am I not doing it well?

**PEKE:** What is it?

**ADE:** Whatever you think it is. Your director can not close two doors for me-the door to his work and the door to my future survival.

**DIRECTOR:** *(Steps aside and joins Peke to watch Ade as he ransacks the table underneath)* I can't understand.

**ADE:** You don't need to. This is a collusion course! I must find my paper. *(Sees his paper. As he struggles to pull it out, he overturns the table)*

**DIRECTOR:** I can't take this. This is beyond pardon. This insanity must be reprimanded somewhere. *(Peke moves to lock the door as Director moves to phone the Police. Ade understands and attempts to push his way out of the office but to no avail).*



## ACT 2

### Scene 1

#### *In the Police Cell of Okido Police Station*

**COMMANDER:** *(Pumping his chest and muscles)* Move to that direction and pay your cell show immediately.

**CELL SERG:** My friend! Don't you hear what our OC is saying?

**ADE:** I don't understand all that

**COMMANDER:** Strip him naked and seize his wear until he understands *(Other inmates rush towards Ade menacingly)*

**ADE:** Wait! Wait gentlemen.

**COMMANDER:** Delay not! Serve him a slap at least for flouting order.

**INMATE 1:** *(Releasing one on his cheek)* You are naughty!

**ADE:** Please wait gentlemen. We are not here to brutalize ourselves.

**CELL SERG:** What are we here then for?

- ADE:** To understand ourselves and appreciate our common problems because we may meet again in the larger society.
- INMATE 2:** When we fail to do so what follows?
- ADE:** We won't fail, unless...
- COMMANDER:** Lift him up first! He doesn't know where he is.
- ADE:** *(While on the shoulder of an inmate)*  
Wait gentlemen. Police! Police come to my aid.
- COMMANDER:** Release him!
- ADE:** *(Continues to shout while on the ground)*  
Police come! I can't bear this. Brutality has brought me to brutality.
- POLICE:** *(Looking through protector)* What's the matter?
- ADE:** I notice an element of conspiracy amongst my fellow inmates. This cell is hostile to me.
- POLICE:** If I hear any more brawl amongst you, I'll chain you, particularly you  
*(Pointing at the commander).*

## EXIT POLICE

**COMMANDER:** (*Addressing Ade*) My friend, this place has a tradition that even the government of the federation cannot break. Here is a different country all together. And I'm sure you know that United Nations Charter of non-interference in the internal affairs of any country applies to this country. That's why some people choose to call our country Angola. Some say it's Alabama City or Kalakuta republic. Even your shouting can not help you because they are conscious of their limitation in matters that concern our country.

**ADE:** But I was making a case for mutual understanding.

**COMMANDER:** Mutual understanding can only come when you have complied with the tradition of this country.

**ADE:** How can I avoid the contravention of your tradition when it is only known to those who apply it and the little I know is harsh on me.

**COMMANDER:** It is expected that any man going into a country for the first time should acquaint himself with the basic emigration laws.

**ADE:** My sojourn into your country is one of the least expectations I have had in my life.

**COMMANDER:** What brought you here?

**ADE:** My future!

**COMMANDER:** How?

**ADE:** In the process of fighting for my future through pool, I stepped on my director's toes.

**COMMANDER:** You mean that perm 3 from 5 brought you here? You are doomed!

**ADE:** I'm not because a lot have met their boom through it.

**COMMANDER:** And you hope to follow suit.

**ADE:** By His grace!

**COMMANDER:** That's your eldorado! All the same, I wish you luck. Now go to the Cell Serg and pay your cell show so that he'll allocate you a space. Then you'll come back to rub my back so that I can endorse your peace and freedom in the cell.

**ADE:** *(Goes to Cell Serg)* Serg., how much is the cell show.

**CELL SERG:** It is ₦250.00 and ₦50.00 for my cigar.

**ADE:** That's on the high side.

**CELL SERG:** Which of them?

**ADE:** I'm talking about the cell show. I don't think I have any thing to do with cigarettes talkless of buying for any body.

**CELL SERG:** Sorry, you have no option. You asked for our tradition, and freely we're giving it to you.

**ADE:** How much can I pay last?

**CELL SERG:** We don't haggle here.

**ADE:** *(As he brings out the money to pay)* Your tradition is hostile and repugnant to my welfare, I must confess.

**CELL SERG:** Now go to our OC and rub his back.

**ADE:** No receipt for me?

**CELL SERG:** *(Laughing)* You amuse me a lot. Well, that idea has no place in our culture.

**ADE:** *(Frowns and goes to the Commander)* I've come to rub your back as your tradition demands.

**COMMANDER:** That's right! You are welcome.



**ADE:** Turn now let me do it and rest.

**COMMANDER:** Must I turn before you do it? Our tradition does not have it that way. But I wouldn't mind if that settles the matter; *(Lowering his tone and turning)* may be you wouldn't want me to watch your pocket as you bring out something.

**ADE:** *(Rubbing his naked back)* Your back is quite large enough sir.

**COMMANDER:** What do you think you're doing. Will you leave my back before I release my anger on you.

In the tradition of your country you rub palm, I know. But here we call it rubbing back. It's all the same thing. Can you now rub my palm?

**ADE:** *(Offering his right hand for a hand shake)* With all pleasure!

**COMMANDER:** *(Calling on Cell Serg.)* Serg, please teach him in the Angolan style.

**CELL SERG:** *(Releases a slap on Ade's chest)* Common! Pay something to him, you sanama beef!

**ADE:** *(Seeing that other inmates were surging towards him)* How much?

**CELL SERG:** Pay ₦100.00 You he-goat!

*(He pays reluctantly to the Commander and sits at a corner of the cell).*

**CELL SERG:** Hei! Come out from there. That's a VIP corner.

**ADE:** Haven't I paid the money you asked for?

**CELL SERG:** How much is it that you should go there. You pauper!

*(BEFORE ADE RISES, TWO INMATES RUSH HIM OUT FROM THAT CORNER. SERG. POINTS AT ANOTHER CORNER FOR HIM, AND HE SITS).*

## ACT2

### Scene 2

*At the Police Station. Ade is bailed and will appear in the court four days later for malicious damage. Ade consults a native doctor to bewitch the prosecuting witness.*

**ADE:** (Behind the bar and addressing DPO) Sir, please dispatch your staff to inform my wife that I'm being detained here.

**DPO:** Isn't your wife aware?

**ADE:** Yes. I went to our office and it was from the office that I found myself here.

**DPO:** Then bring ₦300.00 for the fare.

**ADE:** No; from here to my house is 35.00 and coming back will cost the same which makes it ₦70.00.

**DPO:** Thank you! Cost Accountant! Unfortunately, this is not the right place for your profession.

**ADE:** Not so sir, it's better to establish the actual cost so that I know how much to allow for contingencies.

**DPO:** Youngman, I'll leave until you are serious. The police station is not accounting station.

**ADE:** Ok! Come and take it sir.

- DPO:** This is for the transport. Where is my drink?
- ADE:** How much for that?
- DPO:** ₦200.00.
- ADE:** I don't have money. Please take ₦50.00
- DPO:** That is insult!
- ADE:** No sir, that's what I have.
- DPO:** Ok! I'm leaving you and don't expect a refund of the one you've paid because of the nature of this place.
- ADE:** Come and take ₦100.00. That's the last money on me after paying my cell show and other incidentals (*Turns his pocket and kneels down begging*).
- DPO:** Well, let me help you for God's sake.
- ADE:** Thank you!
- DPO:** M-m-! Corporal Chikwadoru.
- CHIKWADORU:** Yes sir!
- DPO:** Follow me to my office. (*Goes to his office and sits down, Chikwadoru meets him there and gives a salute*).
- CHIKWADORU:** I am here sir.

**DPO:** Yes, you'll go to Ade's house in Ikeni village inform his wife that he is being detained here. She should arrange for his bail before he appears in court on Friday - four days from now. I hope you know the place.

**CHIKWADORU:** Yes sir.

**DPO:** The transport fare will cost N70.00 but take ~~N~~80.00.

*(A WOMAN ENTERS AND GREET)*

**NNETITI:** Good afternoon sir!

**DPO:** Yes, woman can I help you?

**NNETITI:** Yes! I'm Ade's wife, I have just been informed that he is in detention here.

**DPO:** Adele Wagbara you mean?

**NNETITI:** Yes sir!

**DPO:** Yes. Infact that's what we're discussing. Somebody wants to come and fetch you. Your husband has been worried because he was apprehended in the office, and his fear is that no body might alert you.

**NNETITI:** I'm even coming from their office. It was yesterday he left house. After waiting for long, I decided to trace him to the office. It was there I got the information about the problem he had with his director.



**DPO:** And the man is averse to go to court.

**NNETITI:** Can I see him first and give him the food I have.

**DPO:** Corporal, take her to Ade in cell 4.

**CHIKWADORU:** Madam come! (*They walk down*)

**CHIKWADORU:** Adele Wagbara!

**ADE:** I'm here (*Comes close to the door*)

**NNETITI:** (*Burst into tears*) Is this where the work finally brought you?

**ADE:** That's it. But no cause for panic. Arrange for my bail.

**NNETITI:** Take this food while I go to discuss with the DPO.

**ADE:** Alright!

**NNETITI:** (*Moves to see DPO*) DPO sir, I want to bail him at once.

**DPO:** The law does not permit a woman to bail any body.

**NNETITI:** Even a married woman like me?

**DPO:** A woman is a woman. Unless you are ready to pay more than it would cost, if a man is doing it.

**NNETITI:** Does bailing somebody require paying any fee?

**DPO:** Madam, you're funny, your question does not apply to this modern Nigeria. May be you're referring to colonial Nigeria.

**NNETITI:** How much is involved in each case?

**DPO:** If you are bailing him yourself, pay ₦6,000.00 let me cover it up for you because it's against the practice and law. OK?

**NNETITI:** Yes!

**DPO:** If you get a responsible man to take him on ball; then pay ₦3,000.

**NNETITI:** Let me pay ₦3,000.00 and bail him myself, please...

**DPO:** Pay ₦5,000.00 and don't engage me in this horse trading before I lose my patience.

**NNETITI:** *(Unties one end of her cloth and brings out the money)* OK! Take.

**DPO:** Corporal! *(Counts the money)*

**CHIKWADORU:** Sir! *(Runs down to DPO and salutes in military style)*

**DPO:** Go and bring Ade down here.

**CHIKWADORU:** Yes sir! *(Leaves and returns five minutes later with Ade)*

**DPO:** Yes, Ade! You'll go with your wife. Your case will appear in court on Friday, that is three days from now. Make sure...

**NNETITI:** What! Is the matter not ending here?

**DPO:** No madam, the complainant wants it in court. You've only taken him on bail which means that you'll produce him when needed. So go and prepare.

### **ADE LEAVES WITH HIS WIFE**

## ACT 2

### Scene 3

*On his way to the Native Doctor's place. Ade and his wife are accosted by Tax collectors in Owoma town.*

**ADE:** I hear that tax collectors embarrass travellers in this town.

**NNETITI:** So I hear too.

**ADE:** And one does not know how to escape them.

**NNETITI:** They operate mostly around parks.

**ADE:** In case we run into them, don't let them understand that you are in my company. Keep a distance and watch. I'll always wriggle out.

**NNETITI:** *(Pointing at a direction)* Don't you see how that gentle man has been lifted and his shoes removed from his legs.

**DE:** Imagine that. This is why I abhor coming to this Owoma.

**NNFTITI:** The last time I came to buy a few things, a young man would have been blinded for refusing to pay some money. The ID card he presented later to show that he was a student saved him.

**ADE:** Let's change direction.

**NNETITI:** But that's where we can board a vehicle to Calabar.

**ABE:** Yes, we'll eventually come to that point.

**NNETITI:** Alright! Let's take here.

*They divert right. Before they can cover two poles, a group of four men appear before them. Nnetiti continues as though they are not together. Ade is left alone and gripped by two of the men.*

**1<sup>ST</sup> TAX COLLECTOR:** Can we have your tenement rate and development levies?

**ADE:** Hold it gentlemen; we are not in a battle field, are we?

**2<sup>ND</sup> TAX COLLECTOR:** No, if you pay easily.

**3<sup>RD</sup> TAX COLLECTOR:** And quickly too.

**ADE:** That is inevitable, but treat me as a gentleman first. After-all I saw you first. If the antelope intended to fight, it will not have sent its horns backwards; even now, it's just a question of whoo! *(He shifts back while the men remain in their positions, regretting their initial uncivilized attitude).*

**4<sup>TH</sup> TAX COLLECTOR:** Ok, we are sorry! Pay us now.



**ADE:** No listen first, it's true that indiscipline is endemic in our society, but some of us are so gentle that we can afford to pay this thing as many times as we are required provided that our dignity is not punctured in any form. Unfortunately what you are asking for I've paid earlier and the receipt is here with me.

**1<sup>ST</sup> TAX COLLECTOR:** Let's see it.

*(He dips his right hand in his pocket while pretending to be bringing the receipt he shifts a little and takes to his heels. The men run after him but to no avail).*

## ACT 2

### Scene 4

*At INYANG ITIABA SHRINE, Ade appears with his wife. The shrine is fence with raffia palms. There is a red curtain at the entrance. They remove their shoes and clap their hands simultaneously to alert the native doctor whose name is Akpan Nkpokporo.*

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Please hold on there. You Adam and Eve. I say hold on there. *(Staggers to the entrance with his noisy walking stick which was decorated with bells).*

**ADE:** Don't worry, we're waiting.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Yes wait and examine yourselves. My shrine does not function with filths.

**ADE:** Our hands are clean, Akpan.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** If your hands are clean, what about your bodies for the past 3 days at least?

**ADE:** They are blemish-free.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** *(Opens the curtain and stares Ade on the face).* They are indeed, Inyang Itiaba does not spare liars. Come in then! But remove your rings and necklace. *(The couple obeys and walk in behind the*

*native doctor who staggers back to the platform within the shrine. Native doctor sits down and faces the couple who also sit down each of them on a three-legged chair. Native doctor turns to his shrine and applies some substances).*

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Inyang Itiaba, these are your visitors, I don't know why they are here, you know. It is beneath your dignity to request people who consult you to narrate their problems before you solve. You do both. So do same now. *(He continues to utter and conjure as he applies the substance)* Hei! your name is Ade and your wife's Nnetiti.

**ADE:** Yes; Akpan Nkpokporo.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Inyang Itiaba says this is your season but that recklessness may grab your fortune off you.

**ADE:** How?

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Listen, don't Force lyang Itiaba to speak.

**ADE:** Alright!

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** You are to appear in court on a charge cooked with much salt and pepper.

**ADE:** That's right!

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Your opponent is claiming N5m from you if he wins.

**NNETITI:** Ha – a – o!

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** You are billed to appear in court on Friday.

**ADE:** You've got it alright! How then can I escape this malignant plot against me.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Yes, that's the next question, but Inyang Itiaba will determine that. *(He stares at the shrine and later sprinkles some powder. Now interprets the signs indicated at the shrine)* One way is to silence the first prosecution witness

**ADE:** How do we do it?  
*(The native doctor consults Inyang Itiaba by staring firmly on the shrine. In the process; he dips his left hand in his medicine bag and brings item by item the requirements for the job)*

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** *(Keeps a lizard before me)* Does a lizard ever say no?

**ADE:** Not at all

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** What does it do?

**ADE:** It concurs.



**NATIVE DOCTOR:** (*Turning to the lizard*) I hope that is True? (*The lizard which is tied to a tree nodded coincidentally*)

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Does a lizard squeak?

**ADE:** No.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** What does it do?

**ADE:** It's always keeping quiet and looking confused

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** That's what the first prosecution witness will demonstrates in your case. But listen for one more instruction.

**ADE:** (*Sits up and faces the native doctor*)  
Ok! Sir.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Before you go into the box, ensure that you've dipped one of the fingers on your left hand into your anus, and hold it with your right hand as you face cross-examination.

**ADE:** But I have a wish.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** What is it?

**ADE:** I would wish that I don't appear in court at all.

**NNETITI:** That is indeed my fondest desire

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** I should have known that all this while. All the same, it will cost you

₦2,000.00 to get it done that way.

**ADE:** I wouldn't mind (*Ade counts ₦2,000.00 and hands over to the native doctor. Native doctor holds the lizard by the neck and waves it across the head of Ade twice. He then places it into a bottle, and cocks it*).

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** As I've bottled this lizard without any problem, so will the case remain closed for ever. If you believe say: Eyo-o!

**ADE:** Eyo-o!

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Then take the bottle and hide it under your bed.

**ADE:** (*Stretching his hand and collecting the bottle*) Thank you Akpan Nkpokporo.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** One more thing! Make Sure you don't honour the request to appear in court on Friday. This case is hence forth dead, and dead forever.

**ADE:** Alright!

**NNETITI:** Thank you.

**NATIVE DOCTOR:** Thank Inyang Itiaba (*They leave the shrine*)

# ACTS 3

## Scene 1

### POOL OFFICE

**OGO:** Ade, what's wrong? You've been away for so long.

**ADE:** It's been a rough holiday. I have been jostled around by problems of diverse ilks. But thank God that this is my season.

**OGO:** Your season you mean?

**ADE:** Yes.

**OGO:** May be you've forgotten that this week is the final cup week.

**ADE:** I mean my season to emerge victorious in all challenges.

**OGO:** Excluding pool?

**ADE:** Not at all. My key produced 3 killer draws in the fourth round cup. But for the problem I had which kept me in a confinement, I would have been speaking differently by now.

**OGO:** What happened?

**ADE:** My director decided to flex muscles with me. I think I've thought him that a poor man has his own way of dealing with the rich.

**OGO:** I hope it's all over now.

**ADE:** Yes! Quite over.

**OGO:** Thank God!  
*(Enters Ezinwo and Frank who sit on the bench and assemble the forecasting papers before them.)*

**ADE:** Nonetheless, my key has produced some fortune - draws this week. Unfortunately, I have no money to stake.

**FRANK:** How credible?

**ADE:** Those who know me attest to the credibility of my draws; not I.

**OGO:** Well, he does well most of the time, especially on the challenge board.

**EZINWO:** Did he win last week?

**OGO:** He was not around, and I'm not sure he staked.

**ADE:** For almost three weeks now, I've not staked because of certain developments; and pool staking is a full time business.

**OGO:** Yes, you have to be in it to win it.

**ADE:** I've now resumed to face it.



**EZINWO:** Well, if you have a key, that's what I want.

**ADE:** Not just a key, my key has produced three draw bankers this week. So pay your money and have them.

**FRANK:** How much?

**ADE:** Two of you can have them for Ten Thousand Naira. But Ogo (*as a pool agent*) can stamp a coupon for me for five thousand Naira worth.

**OGO:** That's not a problem, but can there be a guarantee?

**ADE:** No greater guarantee than my performance in the past.

**EZINWO:** What?

**OGO:** Well, I know that he has on two occasions carried the day on the challenge board, just as he has on several other occasions been carried by the day. In pool's business, there is no paragon.

**FRANK:** Yes, only the compiler from Cardiff knows it all.

**ADE:** It's not your fault. The bird's eggs have so filled the basket that no one knows the one that will hatch into a male bird.

**OGO:** Even at that a man's history will tell his destiny.

**EZINWO:** To save yourself hazzles of further argument, why not show us the working of the key.

**FRANK:** Alternatively, give us a valuable guarantee,

**ADE:** You will as well give me a valuable guarantee.

**FRANK:** Mine is simple. If I win with your draws, I'll pay you ten thousand naira in addition.

**EZINWO:** The same applies to me.

**OGO:** Mine will be twenty thousand.

**FRANK:** Ade, what's your own then?

**ADE:** If you lose, I'll refund you the amount you spent on staking my draws in addition to the five thousand naira each of you has paid to me now.

**OGO:** Can we document that?

**ADE:** If you like.

**EZINWO:** Yes, let's write everything down.

**FRANK:** Ogo, get a paper.

**OGO:** No, let him give us the bankers first.

**ADE:** Yes, you're right. The numbers are 4, 8, 27,

**OGO:** Frank do the writings

**EZINWO:** You'll read out later.

*(Frank scribbles something on a paper while others wait)*

**FRANK:** I've finished. Listen while I read out what I've written *(He clears his throat and starts)*

'I, Mr. Adele Wagbara, hereinafter called the keyholder, of No.6 Onueluwa Crescent, Port Harcourt, hereby release numbers 4, 8, 27, for purpose of pool staking to Ogo Ndameli, Frank Wadubara, Ezinwo Wagwu, hereinafter called the key -users, on the following terms and guarantees:

- (a) That each of the key users has paid the sum of five thousand naira to the keyholder.
- (b) That each of the key users shall pay additional ₦5,000.00 to the keyholder after winning, with the exception of Ogo who shall pay ₦20,000.00
- (c) That the key holder shall refund the key users the ₦5,000.00 each of them paid to him in addition to the amount spent on staking if the draws fail.

***Signed, sealed and delivered by:***

- 1. Ogo Ndameli:.....  
(Key user)
- 2. Frank Wadubara:.....  
(Key user)
- 3. Ezinwo Wagwu:.....  
(Key user)

**And**

**Adele Wagbara**  
(Key Holder)

**OGO:** I think it's alright! Let's sign.

**EZINWO:** Let's duplicate it.

**FRANK:** We can sign and then photocopy.

**ADE:** That's what I think too.

**FRANK:** After duplicating, Ogo will hold our copy  
while Ade holds one copy.

*(They all sign and depart)*



## ACTS 3

### Scene 2

*Adele wagbara's house. It is Sunday morning. Ade expects that those who bought his draws will come to demand a refund since the numbers did not draw. He lies to his wife who will not want to hear that he is a pool staker, that the men are CID's sent to fetch him to court. The wife hides him.*

**ADE:** Nne my wife, I don't know how I feel this Sunday Morning. I have a premonition that our charm has failed. Some security men may be coming to fetch me to court.

**NNETITI:** Why?

**ADE:** What I saw in the dream today makes me feel so. And you know that each time I dream, it's likely to be true.

**NNETITI:** Then we are finished! Now that we have exhausted all the money we have. I thought as much. And my...

**ADE:** Well, if anybody comes for me, say you've not seen me for about one week now, and that you've reported to the police.

**NNETITI:** Are the CIDs not part of them?

**ADE:** They may not see it that way. I'll hide under this bed. Let all these dirty clothes be spread on me. (*Knock on the door, Ade nods to Nnetiti to answer and lies down to cover himself with clothes.*)

**NNETITI:** Come in. come in (*Returns folded hands as she greets each of the three men*) Good morning sirs.

**FRANK:** Fine morning, madam.

**EZINWO:** Nothing is fine about the morning.

**OGO:** Where is your husband?

**NNETITI:** He is not around.

**EZINWO:** (*Fuming*) This early morning?

**FRANK:** For how long?

**NNETITI:** For about one week now.

**OGO:** It cannot be true. Was it not from here he came to my office on Friday?

**NNETITI:** I don't think so. But may I know you sirs.

**FRANK:** We are his friends and he is indebted to us.

**NNETITI:** How?

**EZINWO:** Woman, pay us since your husband is not here. Stop asking cross questions.

**NNETITI:** Do you mean it's not proper to know who you are and what he bought from you and how much that is involved before paying?

**FRANK:** Well madam, your husband is a fellow pool staker. He sold to us some numbers with a guarantee to refund us all our monies in the event of failure of the numbers. Now they have all failed. We have come for the refund.

**NNETITI:** (*Furious*) You mean my husband plays pool?

**EZINWO:** Not just a staker, a chronic one. See our agreement (*Pointing at Ogo's hand*).

**NNETITI:** Then no need to hide him, see him there covering himself. (*BEFORE THEY CAN RUSH AT HIM, HE UNCOVERS HIMSELF AND RUNS AWAY.*)

*THEY RUN AFTER HIM AND CATCH HIM OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE PUSHING HIM BACK TO THE DOOR STEP.*

**OGO:** Come back and settle us please. You can't escape your buttocks.

**ANK:** And you can't eat your cake and have it.

**ADE:** I thought I told you not to mention my involvement in pool before my wife.

**OGO:** You have made it inevitable.

**FRANK:** Of what consequence is it to us?

**EZINWO:** Settle us please!

**ADE:** How do I settle my wife after you?

**FRANK:** That's your cup of tea.

*(THEY DRAG HIM INTO THE ROOM WHERE  
THE WIFE IS ALREADY FUMING)*

**NNETITI:** Come in and settle them; you shameless goat  
*(HITTING HIS HEAD).*

**OGO:** Yes, because if you had won, nobody would  
seize your winning.

**ADE:** But you'll slash it in the name of half and  
quarter payments.

**OGO:** That is pool! it's not my own creation.

**ADE:** And what has happened is also pool!. Neither is  
it my creation.

**EZINWO:** We've come for the same pool. The White man  
designed it with his computer brain.

**FRANK:** Enough of that! Enough I say. I've not come  
here to debate the fairness of pool business. I'm  
here for my money. That's all!

**OGO:** We're only saying what should be said in  
passing.



**FRANK:** No! It should not be said both in passing and in arrival, because nothing is fair, nothing is just, and nothing is legal about pool. That is why the terms on every copy coupon are binding only in HONOUR. Pool business does not intend to create any legal relationship. That's why the claims often made on pool are not actionable or redressible in court.

**EZINWO:** I don't think so because most promoters and their agents have been dragged to police on account of delay or refusal to pay claims.

**FRANK:** That is ignorance! Mind you, the Police Station is not a law court. The police may not be blunt in condemning claims pivoted on ignorance, but the court can.

**OGO:** Watch it Frank! I hope you're not questioning the legal propriety of our course.

**ADE:** This is apparent: Frank is now my SAA i.e. Senior Advocate of Ade. We'll celebrate this.

**ANK:** No! Far from it! Our business with you Ade, is legal. There was abnition the intention to create this legal relationship; and all ingredients of a valid contract were observed. Infact, we'll confiscate some of your belongings worth the amount in issue until you pay up.

**EZINWO:** Ade, you have only one month to reclaim them, or they'll be auctioned.

**NNETITI:** (*Frowning at Ade*) Yes, that serves you right; pool stake,

**OGO:** (*Carrying Television and Table Fan*) Bye! We're going.

**EZINWO:** (*Carrying Wall Clock and Radio*) Bye!

**EZINWO:** (*Carrying mattress*) Bye Ade!

**NNETITI:** (*Holding his waist*) No, no, you can't carry that one. Where will I sleep?

**FRANK:** (*Walking back*) No, madam, ask your husband that question. We are even being lenient.

**THE WOMAN RE-ADJUSTS THE WRAPPER ON HER WAIST  
AND POUNCES ON HER HUSBAND AS THEY EXIT**

**NNETITI:** (*Dragging Ade around*) You'll have to show me where to sleep today because I did not send you out to play pool.

**ADE:** Please Nne, I'm very sorry awfully sorry. I have not been playing pool and you know it. It's just that the devil plotted for me using the frustration I had at my work place.

**NNETITI:** If you've not been having the interest, the devil wouldn't have got you so cheaply. He uses the sin we like best to tempt us and you know it.

**ADE:** That's not true in my case. (*Looking very sober*) What is true is that after my ordeal in the police, and having lost my job, the devil brought me in contact with an old friend who, hearing my plight promised to help me. The next time we met he gave me what he called five fortune and killer draws, and spoke of them in glowing terms. He charged me to stake them. He even gave me ₦500 to encourage me to stake the games.

**NNETITI:** See what mess your friend has thrown us into. Can't you go back to him to see if he can help out.

**ADE:** Sure I'll. I only need your understanding first.

**NNETITI:** Well, no problem. I'll understand provided something is done urgently about my comfort.

**ADE:** I'll be away for some weeks to look for ways of resolving this scandal. I promise you that I'll do something definitely.

*ADE EXITS AND WONDERS ALOUD IF THIS IS TRULY HIS SEASON. NNETITI IS LEFT ON THE STAGE RECALLING HOW HER LIFE WITH ADE HAS NUMEROUSLY BEEN PUNCTUATED WITH TRAUMAS. SHE ENDS IT WITH TEARS AND CURTAIN CLOSES.*



## ACTS 3

### Scene 3

**GAMBLING BUNK. THIS IS A SECLUDED AREA CLOSE TO A FOREST AND ALL TYPES OF GAMBLING ARE GOING ON HERE. THERE IS A CORNER FOR JACKPOT, OR KALUKALU, TABLE TENNIS AND DRAUGHT, CARDS, LUDO ETC. ADE GOES TO THE CARD CORNER.**

**ADE:** That's my cita!

**EBOM:** (*A Cripple*) Na you biko

**OKON:** I made 21 but not cita, so Ade it's your winning

**EBOM:** We can't continue to set ₦50 each like kids in gambling

**OKON:** Yes I agree. Let's set ₦200 each

**ADE:** Let's start with ₦100

**EBOM:** No, if so please, count me out. I can't continue to mark time like this, unless I want to invite sleep. If you agree on ₦200, at least one winning will give one additional ₦400.

**OKON:** And this is something for a start!

**ADE:** Ebom, what do you mean? How can ₦100 setting make you to mark time. Afterall you're a



cripple and you don't expect to leave here so soon for any other business.

**EBOM:** If you don't want it our way, then give way. Even the ₦200 is meagre compared to what is going on here.

**OKON:** *(Facing Ebom and ready to share the cards)*  
Please let's continue.

**ADE:** *(Tabling his ₦200)* No, share to me also.

**OKON:** Then let me start afresh. *(He reshuffles the cards and shares).*

**EBOM:** A A here for me!

**OKON:** You've made cita. Each of you has made it, and I'm yet to follow suit.

**ADE:** That's why I insisted on taking it gradually. My luck doesn't shine here and my pocket is lean.

**EBOM:** No wonder you complain a lot. Otherwise you're a game man.

**ADE:** Let's play WHOT now.

**OKON:** No, if you're done with us, go to WHOT corner and meet them.

**ADE:** No problem. I'm alive.

**EBOM:** It's your turn now to share, Ade.

**ADE:** *(Taking the cards to snare)* Yes! You're right.

- OKON:** My 19 here.
- EBOM:** Just 17.
- ADE:** This 10 on the floor has killed me. Okon has it all.
- EBOM:** It's my turn now.
- ADE:** To share, yes.
- EBOM:** Not only to share but to win.
- ADE:** That's wishful thinking.
- EBOM:** Watch it then.
- OKON:** I have 20 here.
- ADE:** And mine is 18.
- EBOM:** That's me! I said it. 21 wins them all.
- OKON:** Your positive confession has earned you a feather.
- ADE:** I'm finished. What do I do?
- EBOM:** Then give us way.
- ADE:** Let me set my gold necklace
- OKON:** At what value?
- ADE:** ₦1000.
- OKON:** That's too high. Unless you set it for ₦400

- ADE:** Hei! You know the market price of this brand of necklace.
- OKON:** I'm not talking of the market price. It could be anything, but I'm talking of the gambling price.
- EBOM:** Let's take it for ₦600. I know it can sell for ₦2000 in the open market.
- OKON:** Then we set ₦300 each for around
- ADE:** That's all right!
- EBOM:** I object! Let's set ₦500. Our neighbours are playing for ₦1000 upwards.
- OKON:** I don't mind.
- ADE:** That's okay by me. Anybody can win.
- EBOM:** Ade share the cards.
- OKON:** That's my cita here.
- ADE:** What's wrong with me now? I'll set my shirt this time
- OKON:** No, its too low.
- ADE:** Can I set myself then?
- EBOM:** Provided you price yourself reasonably.
- ADE:** How much do I price?

**OKON:** How do we make use of him? No I wouldn't take him

**EBOM:** We'll accept if he prices himself reasonably. Are you new in games, Okon? Our neighbours here accept persons to be set. Its either you set yourself or you pledge somebody. Well, we can refuse pledges.

**OKON:** How will the person be used if he does not redeem himself?.

**EBOM:** He becomes your slave, If a man; and a wife, if a woman. If the person is too young, he or she becomes either a house boy or-a maid.

**OKON:** Alright Ade, price yourself

**ADE:** ₦100,000.00

**EBOM:** Then go away, we can't afford you.

**ADE:** No, tell me the value you can accept now.

**OKON:** I don't know much about this.

**EBOM:** We can't take you for more than ₦10.000. This is gambling and you need us more.

**ADE:** That's alright. I know I'll cover up

**OKON:** Now each round would mean ₦2000 per person

**EBOM:** Whose turn is it to share the cards now?

**ADE:** It's Okon



**OKON:** (*Reshuffling and sharing the cards*) No problem.

**ADE:** Oh, that's my cita!

**OKON:** Now its N5000 per hand. We must make progress

**ADE:** I care less!

**EBOM:** Can anybody take me on N2000 corner betting.

**OKON:** Yes I can take you.

**ADE:** That's alright! Ebom share the cards.

**OKON:** I have 19 here.

**ADE:** Ebom what do you have?

**EBOM:** 20

**ADE:** Ebom has carried the day. Let me share this time.

**OKON:** Is it your turn? O yes go ahead.

**ADE:** (*Reshuffling and sharing*) Let me see what luck has for me now.

**EBOM:** I have A A here already.

**OKON:** That's your cita!

**ADE:** Oh! I'm finished

**OKON:** The battle is now between I and Ebom.

**ADE:** Can I set my shoes now?

**EBOM:** How dare you say that?

**OKON:** When you set yourself, didn't you understand yourself included all that you have on you presently.

**ADE:** (*Looking sad*) What do I do then?

**EBOM:** Well, wait and run errands for me until you can redeem yourself.

Meanwhile carry me out to ease myself.

**(ADE CARRIES HIM OUT TO A DISTANCE AND RETURNS TO STAY WITH OKON)**

**ADE:** Okon, can you see that I'm finished. How do I cope with a cripple?

**OKON:** If you can just sneak away to see the native doctor at Epikili Harmlet; he'll give you some killer draws to liquidate Promoters and pay up your debts.

**ADE:** How do I trace him? I am avid to go because my problems are complicating daily.

**OKON:** Just go to Epikili. Anybody you ask about Agwotrumbe will take you down.

**ADE:** Thank you for your concern

**OKON:** See Ebom beckoning on you. It's like he is through. Go and carry him home and tell him that I am done for today.

## ACT 3

### Scene 4

#### AGWOTRUMBE'S SHRINE AT EPIKILI

*Ade escapes from the bondage of EBOM and runs to seek help from the native doctor.*

**AGWOTRUMBE:** Youngman! Why have you made yourself my guest?

**ADE:** It's problem Papa! I was encouraged to go into gambling by friends who succeeded through gambling. But since I entered, it has been problem upon problem; even when some thing within me tells me that this is my season.

**AGWOTRUMBE:** Don't worry! You have come to the final bus stop. How would you want it?

**ADE:** I want some sure draws to bet, although I have no money.

**AGWOTRUMBE:** If you want a short cut i.e for me to offer you some charms for gambling, you'll pay ₦5,000, but if you're receiving direct from Amamininkita you'll pay nothing, except that you'll make some vows which will be redeemed at the end of the exercise or when you succeed.

**ADE:** I'll like that!

**AGWOTRUMBE:** Ok! Come along

*(THEY BOTH GO TO THE FOREST WHERE THE SHRINE OF AMAMININKITA IS SITUATED)*

This is the shrine. You'll dig a grave here according to your size. Then you'll sleep in the grave.

**ADE:** For how long?

**AGWOTRUMBE:** It depends on the number of draws you need. If you need 3 draws, then you'll sleep in there for 3 nights. Then in each of the nights you'll make your vow and listen attentively to receive the numbers as they'll be called.

**ADE:** Let me start.

*(HE DIGS THE GRAVE AND SLEEPS THE FIRST NIGHT, SLEEPS THE SECOND NIGHT, AND AT THE END OF THE THIRD NIGHT, AGWOTRUMBE COMES TO THE SHRINE TO CONFIRM HIS REQUEST.)*

**AGWOTRUMBE:** I'm sure you've got what you want by now.

**ADE:**

I've got three numbers, but I want two more numbers to make it five so that I can nap under five.



**AGWOTRUMBE:** As you wish, but greed is very dangerous. I'll go to come back again.

**ADE:** Bye!

**(AGWOTRUMBE LEAVES AND COMES AGAIN AFTER TWO NIGHTS)**

**AGWOTRUMBE:** I am sure you are done by now.

**ADE:** Yes but these last two nights were quite hectic for me.

**AGWOTRUMBE:** What is important is that you've sailed through. What numbers did you receive.

**ADE:** I received 7, 14, 21, 28, 40.

**AGWOTRUMBE:** What vows did you make?

**ADE:** To leave my shoes and wrist-watch here before going.

**AGWOTRUMBE:** Place them in the shrine and then pass your urine into the grave and cover it up. May the favour of Amamininkita go with you.

## ACT 3

### Scene 5

*Ade returns home at night into the warm embrace of his wife*

**NNETITI:** Your long absence at home caused me some panic. Why so long?

**ADE:** It was a necessary adventure. I'm happy that it has paid off.

**NNETITI:** What is the pay?

**ADE:** Not to worry! By next week we'll be smiling in this house. All that I've lost, I'll regain them in hundred fold.

**NNETITI:** Shall we be starving before then?

**ADE:** Just try and carry the home till Tuesday next week. You'll not regret it.

**NNETITI:** You could not buy anything for me or it did not occur to you that I'll still be waiting?

**ADE:** Well, that's true! But I ran into robbers on my way, and all the things I bought for you were snatched from me.

**NNETITI:** You don't mean it!

**ADE:** I don't tell fairy tales. Can't you notice that I am bare footed and my wrist-watch is missing?

**NNETITI:** That's true! What happened?

**ADE:** That's a long story! let me go to bed to resume in the morning when my energy must have returned to me.

**NNETITI:** Then take your bath

**ADE:** No! I am too weak for it.

**NNETITI:** You didn't even ask how I replaced the mattress.

**ADE:** (*Dosing off*) I... I... thought we agreed to resume in the morning

**NNETITI:** Oh you're already sleeping. Ok! Sleep till morning.

*(BOTH GO TO BED. ABOUT 1:00 AM IN THE MORNING, ADE WAKES TO EASE HIMSELF. THE WIFE ALSO WAKES AS HE OPENS THE DOOR BUT STAYS BEHIND ON DISCOVERING THAT THE HUSBAND IS GOING TO EASE HIMSELF)*

### **OUTSIDE THE ROOM**

**ADE:** Who is this short being on my way?

**AMAMINI:** I am the Amamininkita of Agwotrumbe shrine in Epikili land

**ADE:** Whoo-oi Why am I being obstructed at this odd hour?.

**AMAMINI:** I've come to demand my debt from you.

**ADE:** What is it?

**AMAMINI:** You came to my shrine vowing to drop for me your wrist watch and a pair of shoes after I've satisfied you. I later discovered that the items you dropped did not belong to you. They actually belonged to a cripple called Ebom. Now that the spirit of the cripple has come and infact retrieved the items, I have equally come for a replacement.

**ADE:** Can I explain what happened?

**AMAMINI:** I know the details more than you do, so don't bother.

**ADE:** Now what do you need for a replacement?

**AMAMINI:** That depends on my discretion

*HE DISAPPEARS AND ADE RETURNS TO HIS ROOM TO MEET HIS WIFE WHO IS ALREADY GETTING WORRIED BY HIS LONG STAY OUTSIDE.*

**NNETITI:** I was about coming out to see what took your time outside.

**ADE:** Thank your stars that you didn't come.

**NNETITI:** How do you mean?



**ADE:** What I met outside is inexplicable, indeed if I survive till daybreak I'll hold both a thanksgiving and survival party

**NNETITI:** (*More curious*) I can't understand.

**ADE:** You don't need to because I can't understand myself, I am at a cross-road (*Wandering round the room*) I am ruined.

**NNETITI:** Hold yourself and tell me something. Why, frighten me!

**ADE:** My body is changing! My system is changing! I own not myself. Nne bye! I am going (*He slumps*)

**NNETITI:** (*Raising alarm and neighbours gather*) Ade where are you going?

**ADE:** (*Lowering his tone*) I..m going to the unknown.

**NEIGHBOURS:** What happened to him?

**NNETITI:** He just went out to urinate and came back to collapse.

**NEIGHBOURS:** Oh bad spirits have attacked him.

**NNETITI:** (*Weeping*) So my husband has died this way. Oh! I can't bear it.

**NEIGHBOURS:** (*Cripping her in sympathy*) Take it easy. Don't cry this way. You'll injure yourself.

**NNETITI:** *(While foaming and the tongue surging out of her mouth)* What's happening to me? I'm dying!

**NEIGHBOURS:** No you can't die. Let's go to hospital.

***SHE GIVES UP THE GHOST AS ATTEMPT IS MADE TO BRING HER OUT.***

***END.***

## ANCESTRAL WILL

Ancestral Will is a novel by the same author. It is a powerful story which derives its theme from the principle of 'Sowing and Reaping'. It is built around **AMINIKE** – a man of strong but indeterminate fibre, whose valour and prowess can not save from the inexorable **WILL** of his forefathers. Each attempt he makes towards extrication brings him close to the fulfillment of the **WILL** until his misdeeds are expiated.

## About the Author

Born in Elioza - Port Harcourt, Dr. Rowland Worlu holds a Ph.D degree in Political Marketing and Management as well as a Diploma in Creative Writing obtained from THE WRITING SCHOOL, LONDON. He is a Poet, Playwright and Novelist. His first Novel titled: **ANCESTRAL WILL** won an award in the RIVANA literary competition of 1995 under the fiction genre. And this play - **THIS IS MY SEASON** won the Drama Award in the 1996 edition of the same competition.

A devout Christian, he lectures in Covenant University - Nigeria, and has generally notched up a good number of credits on short stories and poetry.



Ade is caught in a web of eldorado as he builds his castle in the air. He loses his job and decides to make the best of gambling at whatever cost; but little does he know that he is digging a grave for himself and the entire household. All these are enveloped in this witty, humorous and refreshing masterpiece.



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